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SIR GEORGE WILLIAMS UNIVERSITY

1963-1964

Seminar in the Teaching of Art

Held by

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Department of Fine Arts

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The Teaching of Art in High Schools.

The role of the Matriculation exam - it should be incidental to the program - exam tests or reveals what has been taught, goals and objectives are outside the exam. Exam is not the object.

What are goals in teaching Art in high school - the role of: techniques, media, styles of painting, self-expression, visual awareness, observation of nature, "Themes", figure drawing, landscape, still life, illustration. Why teach each of these things?

What are the differences in teaching high school art to elementary or art school or university art?

What are the advantages or disadvantages of organizing a program around art elements?

What attitudes do we wish to develop in students (towards art, work, self, life.)? Do our teaching methods allow for this?

How does art in History work in to studio work?

What is meant by principles of design (unity, balance, etc.)? How can you teach this without making it into a formula? What's wrong with a formula?

How do we reconcile abstract designs and emotionally meaningful subjects, people, feelings, social life, etc.?

Do we start with a certain "look" of a finished product in mind, and work towards it?

Do we start with a problem to solve, and are we constantly surprised at the results?

What about "taste"? Useful objects, Art in Surroundings, Buildings, Industrial Design, the school itself.

What is the value of 3-dimensional work, and crafts when it is easier to do paintings and drawing?

What is good art? Where do our ideas about good and bad, beautiful and ugly, come from? Where do our preferences come from, in colour, arrangement, style?

What is meant by "decorative" art? Discuss the differences between decorative and expressive using examples from works of artists.

What are the reasons behind different forms in art?

What about function in design?

Advantages and disadvantages of a developmental plan for art lessons - development towards what? Danger of rigidity.

Students should be aware of your reasons for setting next problem or subject.

Students should be conscious of what they are learning. Have them keep a record, their own evaluation, to help you in your evaluation. They should write up each finished work.

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Nov. 7, 1962.

Seminar: Teaching of Art in High School

Reading: The Dissipated Octapuses

Criticism of high school teaching methods in England which emphasize gimmics, meaningless tricks, forced "freedom", undirected self-expression, new stereotypes replacing old reactionary methods, imposed styles.

Advocates a problem solving, structural, practical approach. Using example of the building of a solar cooker in a camp to cook hot dogs.

Discussion: What should be goals - objectives in teaching art in high school - Abstract art of realism? Are high school students lacking in imagination? Egocentric? What about talent - what is talent - what about imposition of teachers' taste - what do we teach, why - etc.

Answers: Start with reasons than find methods - Important to remember that if we start with product in mind we are in danger of meaningless approach - students end up doing mechanical, physical excercises rather than gaining insight and knowing what they are doing." Danger of isolated experiences which mean nothing. Start with problem to solve - solution not predictable - (within limits.)

Where do we find our problems for high school. Start with student. *Don't agree that egocentricity something harmful - High school students want to relate to larger sphere - looking for means of identification but must accept and understand themselves first. Are self-conscious - help them to become self-accepting and self-aware - then bring in art - (What is art? To be defined.)

Doing things outside the art room - gym decorations, etc. - what this means. Activities done in a real setting, with real needs and problems - to be solved.

Remember how we were taught in High School - series of separate, isolated experiences - no plan or development.

Effect of teachers' taste and preferences - How are high school students different from elementary? "Imagination dries up at 13 - reaches a plateau" - do you agree?

What causes the inhibition of high school students in art? - How do we overcome it.

One important thing is to recognize the High School students' growing intellectual capacity and ability to analyze and organize experience.

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DISSIPATED OCTOPUSES

The Times Educational Supplement recently published a number of photographs showing boys and girls at Little Lake School in California making their own solar cooker. Children of about ten were constructing a large dish-shaped cooker from scrap timber. Some were cutting cardboard and aluminium with shears, others were glueing the shapes to the timber structure, others were carefully covering the surface with metal foil; some again were fixing the metal rods, welded to make the spit. The excitement was obvious; everybody was intent on the job. The finished object looked beautiful; and it obviously worked -- the sausages were cooked.

The caption did not say whether this was a lesson in elementary science or a lesson in the art room, but for me these photographs reinforced and clarified ideas I have had for some time about the failure of art education in the later stages of school life.

For some years I have been a visiting art examiner in training colleges for teachers. Year by year this has meant looking at the student-teachers' own paintings and sculpture and considering their approach to art in schools--in the infant, junior, or secondary schools in which they will one day work. It has seemed to me that the principles and general shape of art teaching in infant schools and junior schools in England are exemplary. Each year the exhibitions of children's work between five and ten years show beyond question how right the direction has been--the directions that in this country was largely set by the superb work of Marion Richardson.

But these exhibitions also show, and most people know by now, what heavy weather is made in the years beyond eleven. Something goes wrong. In place of the supremely confident outpouring of the early years we get a tangled self-consciousness. Psychologists will say 'that's what one should expect'. I would reply that whereas the educational psychologists have done some really hard thinking and have found the best way of encouraging the young child, no one has yet given anything like the same basic attention to adolescent art. So it is very much left to the teachers.

DSome of the more intellectual ones may be busy studying the products of adolescent art, sorting out the pigeon-holes--'introvert', 'extravert', 'haptic', and the rest--into which the work falls or can be pushed, but few question the educational ideas on which most of it is done. I am sure that in the hands of a trained psycho-analyst this pigeon-holing could be of importance, but practised by art teachers untrained in psycho-analytical method it is likely to do harm. But anyway most teachers in their day-to-day practice work empirically and try to extend the range of their fourteen-year-olds in various ways, introducing 'folksy' craftwork or misguided little essays in conventional applied arts like wallpaper design. And though it is hard to believe this, there are even numbers of schools where the bastard activity of hand-painted repeat-pattern-making is still practised: one unit produced again and again in a geometric grid by laboriously copying or tracing it--an idea that can only have real meaning in terms of a mechanical process--such as a block printing or screen printing. Why do it? What is it for? No one in those schools has thought of asking the question.

Other art teachers go in for some sort of would-be commercial design-posters, imitative book-jackets--not infrequently with ghastly lettering. To my mind, all this is inappropriate to children and evades the real problem. And in painting there is the almost invariable tendency to encourage spectacular and violently dramatic subjects: one finds an unending series of pitcures called 'Fire','The Explosion','The Raiders','Smash and Grab','Bonfire Night','Ecstasy','Depression'. The fallacy is to assume that this sort of exciting subject will necessarily produce an equally exciting picture.

Another false trail is the so-called 'abstract'. Have you ever seen a number of these things by fourteen-or fifteen-year-olds? It would surprise you how alike they are. They are said to be abstract but in most cases they are a curious misunderstanding of the idea of abstraction. They are usually based on a known object--'Buttons and Bows', 'Seaweed', 'Treble Clefs and Notes of Music',and so on. No attempt is made to understand the form or nature of the object: what the children tend to do is a jazzy arrangement of geometric shapes or amorphous waves of colour with these realistic or at any rate identifiable objects floating about in them, the whole thing looking like a dissipated octopus.

It is clear that they do not really come to terms with the true principles of abstract structures at all. I believe that the children do them in a way dictated by their own bone structure--the wrist and the elbow for instance act as fulcrums of a particular kind; it is easy to wheel your hand and arm round from left to right and to produce circular and zig-zag motions. And it is precisely these easy, mindless, undirected rhythms, shapes, loops, zig-zags and coils that appear again and again in these pictures. The same swirls and tentacles are now beginning to throttle even pottery and modelling. This is something entirely impersonal; faced with numbers of these one simply would not know which kind of child had done them. They are stereotypes--records of purely physical activity. You may say that surely this is what Jackson Pollock did, but in actual fact it is not, because he was already critically conscious, already an adult artistic intelligence.

Art teachers, when challenged on all these points I have been making, largely blame the present pattern of examinations for the General Certificate of Education, and I must say that reading through some of the recent examination papers I can well see how many of these questionable activities have been encouraged.

But behind it all, both the teaching itself and the examinations pattern, you can dimly perceive the line of thinking. The free and spontaneous work of the early years almost invariably diminishes and sometimes stops altogether, and ways of countering this must be found. These excursions into applied art, or imitative poster, or attempts to whip up another phase of so-called 'self-expression' are all means to this end. I say 'whip-up' because I do believe this is not true self-expression. The pupil soon realizes that the words 'free' or 'lively' or 'exciting' -- all words beloved of art teachers--are synonymous with the recording of purely physical rhythm, the excited swinging about of the arms, impulsive gesture and spontaneous stroke. Whatever the subject, he realizes that he is expected to make a certain kind of picture.

I came across a blatant example recently--two illustrations in a book by a distinguished American professor of art education. Both are drawings done by the same youth--one a profile done with a sharp pointed pencil, as lucid and strange as an Indian line drawing or a Pisanello; the other, on the opposite page, a physically vigorous chalk drawing in the manner of a German expressionist, and the caption under this one reads, 'Free representation made by the same student, Frank Stewart, after applying correct stimulation'. 'Free' and 'correct'-- is this not an instance of making children slaves of an adult conception of 'freedom', diverting them from clarifying in their own terms their observations of reality and their desire to create order?

I am not arguing a case against 'action' painting; how could one in the face of the astonishingly rare achievements of a Jackson Pollock? Nor am I trying to open the door for dreary reactionaries who would like to teach perspective again. What I am questioning is the notion that expressive freedom is necessarily associated with certain specifically physical characteristics--making large and thick brushstrokes all over the paper or swinging the arm about in vigorous movement--or that it must necessarily mean releasing the latent melodramatic fantasies which we know exist in thirteen-or fourteen-year-olds.

One thing characteristic of children between eleven and sixteen is their widening horizon, their passion for the real objects and situations encountered in the grown-up world. Today, of course, children are relating themselves not only to the world of nature but also to science. Even theyway in which they tend to look at nature is changed by, say, the new conceptions of space in the universe, or new insights into the structure of the atom. In fact many children now have a reciprocal and related interest in man-made constructions (how things work, how they are put together) and the construction of nature. It is precisely this dissecting analytical interest and this interest in building, in constructing, that I want to take up, because I believe it offers something positive to art teaching that at present is almost ignored.

I do not at all believe that a child's aesthetic expression disappears at eleven-plus -- I think it takes different forms. Just as in botany or biology children dissect and made diagrammatic records of the functional systems they find, so they should be encouraged to dissect and analyse forms in the art-room and make their own analytical drawings of the structural principles and systems they discover. These in turn should become the suggestive ideas for building equivalent systems and structures out of all sorts of materials -- clay, cardboard, glass, plastic, sheet-metal, wire and the techniques that go with them, cutting and welding and so on.

Some art teachers will tell me that they already do this kind of thing in making collages. This is just not so: it is true these collages are pictures built up from random materials, but because they are based on no real structural idea or discipline they simply turn out to be the same old dissipated octopus, only this time done in bits of old velvet, paper doilies and sequins. The important thing in what I have described is the connexion between all the phases in the evolution of the idea: the initial observation of the object, the process of analysing or dissecting it, the preparation of drawn analyses, then the turning of the structural system discovered into a new independent structure, equivalent to that of the object itself. There might even be a limitation in the materials to be used. You could set a group of children the task of making a new structure from only straight rods and flat planes, or from a series of elliptical shapes. I do not think it helps either a child or an artist to have unlimited freedom. After all the architect and the engineer are not absolutely free -- and it is the child with a potential talent in those directions who would benefit most from all this.

Because of the technological slant that we are now given to education, secondary schools must give a great deal of attention to such children and yet they do so painfully little to develop their sort of talent aesthetically. In all probability a boy who plans to become an engineer will already have his mass-produced model aeroplane kit under the desk. But the excitement and the 'education' in actually designing the object, working out the materials to be used, seeing what was in the mind's eye become materially real -- all this has been denied him.

What is more, the workshop practice he may get at school does nothing to train his aesthetic sense. It is a sad fact that when schools have a vacancy for a metalwork or woodwork teacher they invariably advertise for a technical expert only, without inquiring about the candidate's qualities as an artist, a designer.

But this is a side-issue. I am not really arguing for this kind of art teaching because it might do good to engineers or to the export trade. I want to see it introduced for all kinds of teen-age children. The importance to me of the Little Lake School's solar cooker lies in the fact that it was an experience that was complete, even to the final stage when the children had to find the right position and tilt for the sun's light and heat to converge and do their cooking. If it is maintained that art is exclusively self-expression, then what these children have experienced is not art; but is it really true that it has no relation to artistic creative experience?

There is a constant give and take between the maker and the thing he makes, so that one cannot conceive of the artist as impressing his completely pre-determined mental image upon the object. He acts rather as a super-sensitive instrument for detecting and responding to the needs and demands of the evolving form. He is caught up in a creative rhythm in which one move, one colour, one structural element calls into being the next. I feel sure that this must also be so in the case of music, and there are certainly many instances of writers suggesting that this sort of situation occurs.

I believe we should begin to introduct the adolescent to this idea that he does not dominate the object he makes but that he should respond to its evolving nature, to the inner principle of its growth. In doing this we shall have helped him to break through the 'egocentricity' which reaches its most intense form at this stage of development. We shall have helped him to see and respect the nature of things.

Thus what I have in mind is not something exclusively geared to the talented pupil, or to the child with a technical gift. It could and should be equally valuable to every pupil in the class. This sort of artistic experience, because it is based on constructive factors and techniques, would help to get over that stage in adolescence when children become dissatisfied and bored with their own painting and drawing because their critical faculties have developed faster than their powers of excution.

But what I have been describing is no easy option. This sort of teaching would make great demands on the teacher. He himself would need to be creatively alive, inventive, resourceful, and intelligent. It would be both unfair and misleading not to mention the fact that something along these lines is now being done in one or two of the better secondary schools, but we really have not begun to tackle the problem. What I am pleading for is a development of individual sensibility and not the imposition of a system; at no point does it involve a mechanical application of theory. A pupil will have to face afresh each new configuration he makes as a form with a life and structure of its own. Sometimes it will be an abstract thing of pure geometry; sometimes a practical thing like that life-size solar cooker -- which I confess I do consider to be a work of art. --
Third Programme

Maurice de Sausmarez from The Listener, April 9, 1959.

SIR GEORGE WILLIAMS UNIVERSITY

Seminar: Teaching of Art in the High School.

Nov. 14, 1962.

Discussion:

History assignment done by one of the seminar members for a university course: a copy of Greek vase:

Any learning involved? University level assignment or suitable to high school as well? Yes, learning to see and recognize details, learning to identify styles. Good for university level. High school would need more stimulation.

This led to a discussion of problem of interesting teen-agers - teacher's personality - discussion of Canadian youth - necessity to be entertained in school - differences between motivation on a superficial level and more lasting kind of involvement.

We must be realistic and start where student is, but we must not feed the negative aspects of their life. Teen-agers are a commercial market. - The object of advertising.

E.g.: A high school teacher, Miss S., who was important because of her spiritual values. Even though teen-agers value clothes, cars, etc., we must remember it is vitally important to give them the example of what art can mean. We must emphasize the non-saleable - priceless qualities, the intrinsic values of the experience - "beauty", "colour", "form" - joy of creating for its own sake.

What teachers do you remember as inspiring in high school? What were they like?

Answer. English teacher who was rather sloppy but loved his subject.

Love of subject important. Led to a discussion of problems of artist-teacher and/or teacher-artist.

Kathy's examples of 2 teachers, one M. A. in Fine Arts - emphasized methods - rules and formulas - and then artist who taught more freely, emphasizing response to subject.

Kind of teacher not so much dependent on whether they are an artist, but on their attitudes towards people and teaching, freedom, rules, etc. Artists can teach rules also - his own rules, or ways of working.

Helen - discussion of Medieval Theme for Pageant at Museum. Thought the children copied pictures of costumes without knowing why - all ended up with the same thing. Would be more meaningful in school if taught in conjunction with Medieval History. Reference made to high school course - art in History.

Also mentioned Dr. L. drawing for students, felt they were deflated by experience because they couldn't do what he did.

Much discussion pro and con - inspiration vs. discouraging aspects - students want to watch someone - be entertained, very enjoyable - Helen thought that was fine outside art lesson.

Drawing to demonstrate a point - we use visual communication as artists - teachers shouldn't deny it. Never on student's work. All agreed this was violating student's integrity. On a separate paper - always demonstrate more than one way. Students curious, want to see work of teacher - suggestion, arrange an exhibit of your work, perhaps with some other artist of a different style, in school for students.

Discussion of whether seminars were too vague so far? No, all background important - but want to get down to what to teach - comment: "I'm scared of first day in a class - What shall I say?" - Discussion - one girl remembered a particularly well worked out series of exercises she did in a first year class - this could be

taught in high school on a simpler level?

I brought up their own experience in studio - structured vs. unstructured situations. Order clear all the way through, or floundering at first, finding problems and then resolving them - order growing out of confusion - pros and cons.

Helen mentioned design problems - very vague - problem set, no solutions given - difficult - but satisfaction great later. To be continued next time.

SIR GEORGE WILLIAMS UNIVERSITY

Seminar: Teaching of Art in the High School.

Nov. 21, 1962.

What to teach.

Should we have a definite plan or should it be haphazard - what is the best way to start -
Margo - start with equipment. What do you have to work with, what materials will you be using? Have to get them first.

Plan shouldn't be too rigid - must vary with group.

Others: - should have sequence. Discussion of their own studies, work - why does instructor start with certain problems and assignments. Reasons for timing and sequence. Student, art teacher should be aware of this development or sequence or lack of it.

In order for an art teacher to be flexible and take freedom with a course of study, he or she must have a rich art background and a good knowledge of art history. Choices dependent upon scope of teacher. If not prepared - they want to follow a step by step outline. Experience also gives freedom -

Discussion of reasons for taping sessions: Story of administrator interested in a balanced program saying art teachers must prove the need of art.

Need to prove art in schools - why - atmosphere - new teachers are likely to meet, - attitude on part of principal and staff - why? Don't have to prove other subjects - need to prove art a cultural social problem. Attitudes of students to art - apathy - art not important.

What to do, how to get art into the school - exhibits, etc. Interest, other teachers - Margo's story of art students doing portraits of teachers, teachers coming into art room for sittings - etc.

All agreed we must start with students who are taking art and interest them -

How? Big question - Most students lack confidence. Margo's story of teaching swimming - students afraid - must give them confidence - swimming is also a practical thing - must learn to do something they have no skill at. Skill is a factor - students compare themselves with others. Don't want others to laugh at them - must first be placed in the environment - the water, - same as art - let's start with environment - when we come into a new art room - must prepare a rich visual environment - colours - visual excitement - posters, prints - fabrics - natural things - etc., art materials - to excite students and awaken curiosity to try new things.

Then praise efforts of students - led to a discussion of standards, do we praise everything a student does? What is "right" and what is "wrong"? What do we teach? Do we praise what teacher likes?

"I think we do have to set up standards. I remember when some art teachers were afraid to show reproductions of paintings for fear of influencing students, I have always felt it was my job to influence them - they come with stereotypes, clichés, commercialism, we have to give them something else to look up to. Our culture

young in Canada - but we have a history - the average family hasn't a background of works of art or carefully chosen objects - we need to supply this in the art room.

Where do we as teachers get our ideas of good and bad, desirable and undesirable in art?

Kathy - it's very confusing, now as students, we don't know - one teacher may tell us to learn anatomy, another to put blobs of paint on without thinking about it, which is right?

Next time, more of this, only one thing before we decide on right or wrong, we must be clear about our intentions and our objectives in teaching art.

SIR GEORGE WILLIAMS UNIVERSITY

SEMINAR - TEACHING OF ART IN THE HIGH SCHOOL

November 28, 1962.

Standards in the Teaching of Art.

Discussion began about confusion of standards, what is right or wrong in an art class.

Question - Where does an art teacher get her standards?

Margo - "an art teacher shouldn't have standards which are too clear, or too rigid."

Helen - "Our standards are personal, they come from reading and our own art experience. Students don't all see quality in contemporary art exhibits, but this doesn't mean they are no good. Talent may result in products which are good."

We must define our own limits in the situation.

Some guiding principles might be 1) the specific problems the class is trying to solve. Have they succeeded?

2) What are art problems? Are they dealing with art? Requires a definition of art.

Badanna - "There are changing concepts of art from 19th to 20th century, for example."

Helen - "Today, art is an experiment in the act of painting. Painting is an experience in itself, rather than a record of past experience."

Question - Should we be teaching "Modern Art"?

Quotation from Munro - "Art in Secondary Schools - The Interrelationship of the Arts", concerning modern artist lacking discipline. How does this apply to teaching?

Discussion centered around problem solving aspect of art teaching.

Helen - problems should relate to daily life, design and organization should be stressed.

Margot - Design exercises should be presented in an exciting way -

Adele - Design should be related to experience, there is a danger in isolating design. There is the necessity to train students to see - design should be taught by a good teacher and be kept flexible.

Further quote from Munro re "no continuity in art program, no common background in art through school life."

The reasons for lack of continuity, no common goals - the emphasis on art varies due to interest and understanding of each teacher and principal.

We should accept the concept of continuity in planning a program and work towards it.

Elementary school generally good. High School is much weaker. In elementary school the intuitive approach is accepted.

Margo - there is design evident in elementary school - call it "modern art" because of lack of understanding of what modern art is. Action painting is only one part of it. Teachers pick it up as "free expression" to free children who are afraid to be spontaneous.

Helen - some think of it as anything goes.

Mr. Gregory - didn't abstract artists start with realism - and yet history of art worked from abstract to realism.

Margo - the function of art in primitive society is different to child art." Children's art lacks skill and dexterity.

There is confusion between the development of art forms in a culture and child art. How does cultural affect the development of child art?

Discussion - Do we need to know how to draw well in order to develop abstract painting? Also the difference between a child's abstract painting and one by a mature artist.

Mr. Gregory - Doesn't the high school student want to paint realistically? Shouldn't they go through this stage first and then go on to other kinds of art? High School students don't appreciate expressionistic. Should we encourage naturalism and observation?

Margo - the 2 separate aspects should be developed simultaneously. Drawing and Design.

Quote again from Munro - 3 main ways of teaching art are practical, historical and theoretical.

Discussion - the weakness in some art classes is that practice, skill and technique are the only emphasis. They leave out historical and theoretical, principles and criticism.

The best way is the co-operation between all three.

Munro - "The word Creative is used too freely". What does it mean? There is a difference between spontaneous and creative. Freedom and lack of imitation doesn't mean it's creative. What is creative?

Helen - awareness of what they're doing? Understanding. Experiences have to be cumulative. Is children's art art or a developmental stage in growth?

Helen - confusion exists in that people think that any practicing artist is creative - not always true.

Munro thinks you could start by imitation and end up with a creative act. Is this true? Is creativity only possible after a background has been achieved?

Margo - A person must reach a point of confidence and competance first, and control of the medium.

In planning a program for High School we have to integrate several aspects - interrelationship of skill, theory, history and practice, all related to the kind of people we are teaching and how they will respond. Study of adolescent necessary.

Helen - "Shouldn't the student relate things for himself?"

SEMINAR ON THE TEACHING OF ART IN HIGH SCHOOL

December 12, 1963.

Discussion began with the Academic value of the seminar to the participants.

Question - Should an academic course train you for a career?

Answer - Ann - I am taking art in University but I'm not sure how to apply it to a career. I want to find out more about teaching, to get an idea of the field, before I make up my mind.

Question - What does "Academic" mean.

Answer - Learning, a particular kind of learning, academic usually means learning according to a set pattern. Our seminar doesn't have a set pattern, we create our own.

An academic course should have theoretical background as well as practical. Should have depth.

Question - Does this seminar have any effect on the rest of your program?

Yes - We see the relationship of different aspects of the program, there is order to the sequence. We also can study the creative process. In the studio you are developing as creative people. Where should one discuss the theory of creativity if at all? We are all involved in it. Some feel discussion of it destroys it.

In order to teach to develop creativity in others we must have experienced it ourselves. In order to recognize it in others we need an understanding of the process. We cannot leave it all to intuition. The student art teacher needs to go a step further than the ordinary art student, he must be aware of the educational significance of what he is doing.

Analyzing at the time of doing is no good. It inhibits creativity. But concurrently, when our experience is still fresh and meaningful to us, it is very valuable to discuss its implications. Our discussions here are full of references to art history and studio work. If we don't discuss its implications to the teaching of art now, we are losing a living opportunity. Discussion helps us to understand what you are doing in other courses too, as part of your total experience.

This is especially important in the final year when you are definitely focusing on teaching as a career.

Question - How can we make the seminar more useful? Suggestions:-
Belong to a professional organization. Observe classes in action, elementary as well as High School.

Do related reading on psychology of education, art education, related to history of education.

Why do methods differ now? Patterns are still used (Helen) because teachers don't know any better.

Discussion turned to reasons for lack of art specialists in elementary school, pros - and cons., and the desirability of discussion of children by teachers and the real problem of teaching.

This lead to the discussion of the University as an ivory tower and the seminar as bringing real problems into a university course.

How would we relate visits to schools to the discussion part of the seminar? The seminar shouldn't be too formal, not too much writing up of visits.

Time involved in field work - should be regular hours worked into schedules.

Discussion continued with comments on slides of High School students paintings viewed the previous week. (December 5th)

Review of reactions to the slides showed refered to the changing teaching methods used. These were slides taken of work done with students over a period of 10 years by the same teacher. Early work emphasized design elements - later, more expressive and personal, emphasized mood and individual ideas.

Should we teach definite things? Design can be rigid, depending on how it is taught.

Has design feeling? Discussion led to non-objective, geometric painting such as Monduin and whether it has any emotional content.

We have to define design.

Mr. Gregory - said it is part of every painting.

Florence - thought it has to be taught in isolation first, absorbed and then used unconsciously?

Is there a difference in teaching design at the High School level and at university and Art School level?

What are the reasons for teaching design in High School?

The students need some basis for development, otherwise they repeat what they already know.

Gloria - offered example of the girl who did the same horse repeatedly - what to do about her. Needed to develop, start with the horse and lead her to more observation. High School students need variety, want to do something different each time. If they have done a still life once, they think they have finished with it. They must be taught to experience more in the subject - it is not the subject but how you see it and deal with it.

The problem is how to provide variety and still have some basic learning and continuity.

Adele - suggested organizing a course around design elements. Plans are necessary but shouldn't be too rigid. For e.g. story of problem class of 14

year old boys - rough, no interest in art - resentful of situation, etc. Starting with exercises in design would have been useless. The teacher had to get them doing something immediately, involved in a real activity they could identify with.

She started them building an airport - design grew out of the activity rather than beginning it. Material and ideas brought in as they were working.

It is important to teach something definite in High School. Design is handy. What are we leaving out? Isolated techniques such as the strawberry box, etc.

Adele - We still used perspective, how do we teach it?

It is important to catch the students interest. For e.g. when perspective is necessary to express an idea it is easier to learn. Isolated techniques are discouraging.

E.g. of interesting ideas, birds eye view of a walk to school, preceded by studying still life from many eye-levels. Awareness of shapes, etc. The painting had lots of shapes and textures also a linear movement following the path to school.

REPORT

January 30, 1963.

Slides of Matric - Examination.

Effect of teaching techniques - explored. Disassion on effects of examination. How do you mark art, why. What about student motivation.

Attitude of students towards grades - attitudes of teacher.

Methods of evaluating need developing.

Outside pressures - atmosphere in the school, parents attitudes, do we praise everything? standards? level of achievement, art as a discipline - art as fun or therapy - How do we develop intrinsic values in the art class. Your own attitude important. They will value what you value (in time)

February 6, 1963.

Discussion with Maria on Design Class products.

The thinking of the students was shown in products carrying each through stages of thought building up (like Maria's way of thinking) bit by bit - each experience offering something - wandering - infinite variations with one material - different to teaching through clearly thought out approach from past experience. The great value to the students is in the searching - arriving at realization - through trial and error a clear cut approach limits mistakes - but also limits discoveries?

Use of one material mainly paper value of searching for materials themselves rather than teacher bringing them in - become aware of sources, excitement of everyday materials - hardware shops - basement - etc.

Matter of taste, how do we deal with people preferences, etc. Can't insult them - we are dispensers of taste - all we do is get them to evaluate experiences for themselves. Why do you like this or that - examine their value system; see that it is made up of associations rather than intrinsic values.

February 13, 1963.

Showing of UNESCO slides on High School Art. Set on design from Germany:

Teaching design elements, live, movement, rhythm, shape colour, texture, etc. Ending up with finding design in Nature.

Very rigid and results too predictable, because of the limitations of material offered. More variety and room for personal choice in tools and media would help. Should have started with nature. Include nature of materials, potentialities, energy producing different kinds of line, etc.

Sculpture - (USA) More personal, wider range of subject and media. Titles too pseudo-psychological.

REPORT (cont'd)

February 20, 1963.

Taped Recording of "The Head of the Class", Iglehart

Discussion centered around the personality of the teacher; freedom, conformity and conventions. Where do we get our own image of ourselves as teachers? What type of non-conformity is desirable?

It should be based upon ideas and principles not simply the wish to shock or to assert oneself.

Ideas of freedom in teaching were discussed for e.g. Romantic teacher - Helen thought some teachers imagined wonderful things were going on in the child's mind, when this was really in the teacher's own mind!

Also we can impose freedom - by bushes, bright colours, etc.

One has to arrive at ones own concept of teaching from many sources.

SIR GEORGE WILLIAMS UNIVERSITY

SEMINAR February 27, 1963.

The Teaching of Art in High School

Adele began discussion by bringing up an idea she had about how to deal with stereotypes. "If a high school student drew pretty faces all the time, I would try to show her the difference between commercial art and fine art." "show her portraits painted by artists in different periods and what they looked for."

Led to a discussion of stereotypes, what they are, reasons for students having them, why some hold on to them.

Gregory voiced confusion between stereotypes and primitive Art - Example of Barbara L. a student in one of our classes who couldn't get rid of clichés. Helen brought up the personality difficulties and home backgroung involved.

Discussion went to stereotypes vs. creativity, what is new and imaginative.

Imagination and phantasy, differences between the two ideas. We can't teach imagination, we can only stimulate it through the atmosphere we create and the challenges to the student.

Led to a discussion of individual teacher's technique of stimulating imagination, Stanley H. does it through spontaneous song or action in the classroom, allowing intuition and creativity to enter into the process of teaching.

This leads to joy of discovery due to the process of art, the end product is not predictable.

Led to a discussion of creativity and research McFee and her research on creativity as a process: What is a creative person? What is a creative teacher? Are there certain art materials which offer more scope - for example - a discussion of Maria's work with design students showed the danger in the use of fancy display materials which were pre-disigned before student worked with them.

Discussion into creativity in science and music. Reference to Ghiselin's book on the creative process. Also autobiographies of creative people give us insight into this.

Finally - methods of evaluation of art work considered and difficulties of evaluating creativity as such. Grading often creates inhibitions. Necessary to establish confidence in creative ability first - a classroom atmosphere which encourages discovery and self-realization, allows for intuition and does away with fear and inhibition is a pre-requisite for creative activity.

The teacher provides this atmosphere.

SIR GEORGE WILLIAMS UNIVERSITY

November 13, 1963.

Seminar on the Teaching of Art in the High School.

First meeting of the seminar group which met last year. 4 members of previous group plus 7 new members.

Exploration of possible content of seminar discussions.

Introductory discussion centered around obversations made by students who had visited art classes in high schools at the end of last year. Students had observed teachers approach. Content, students reactions and results or products. They questioned the reasons for what had been presented, and also the validity of presenting these techniques and ideas.

The importance of these classroom visits was evident. Need to arrange for them again. Perhaps earlier in the year.

The observations of art classes in action raised questions which centered around the use of materials, the teaching of techniques, the teaching of figure drawing. The example described was one in which the teacher had introduced a new material, (oil pastel and turpentine) and was trying to achieve "effects". They had been asked to do figures in this new media. Many were having difficulties with both medium and figures.

November 20, 1963.

Discussion started with an experiment done in Fine Arts 251: 2 of the seminars participants are members of the class. Description of method of starting with torn paper figures, masses, and painting around this - reasons - breachs down inhibitions, encourages consideration of mass.

When all had assembled L.S. started discussion on Matric examination in art and how it is judged - 50% classroom teachers year's grade, 50% examiner.

Discussion about purposes of examination, desirability of evaluation, difficulties involved, who should mark it, etc.

Question: How can you test "art"?

Jason: "Can't tell creativity from a test"

Helen:- "We need examination to give the subject prestige."

Question: Is there anything we can test in an art examination?

Gloria: "The examination tests the teacher, what has been taught, as well as the student!"

Helen: "Teacher can be judged on the variety of results achieved."

E.g. of above: If the teacher concentrates on one subject, still life for instance and approaches it in one way, for chiaroscuro and naturalism, then no test will reveal creative or imaginative treatment of material.

Question: What could teacher teach to achieve variety in results?

Gloria: "Teach art elements - explore still life for elements - first week study shapes. Second week, textures. Third week combine the two, etc. Or a still life could be selected and arrangement made by the student from a haphazard assortment of objects.

Question: What happens if they choose all small things and arrange them poorly?

Answer: This makes a teaching situation

In selecting material for teaching the teacher must have an underlying purpose and be stressing principles which carry over from one theme to another. Organizing a course into subject matter is not enough. It would help if the examiner had the same understanding of principles as the teacher.

The teacher's attitude is important and carries over to the student.

Looking at a syllabus for material - many are organized around art elements, but teachers must select material and present it in a way which is meaningful to the particular group she is teaching. Environment, age, interests, past experience in art, teachers' own interests are factors.

Teacher should be careful not to over emphasize a particular art because of her own particular interests. It is important to provide a broad range of experience.

Courses of study can be dangerous - teacher may rely on it exclusively and ignore the real needs of her group. Students must feel involved in planning the programme and not feel it is all handed down by the teacher, students want to feel they are learning something. In addition to teaching art elements "something the student can hang on to" teenagers should be able to express their interests and concern with life. The teachers attitude towards their mode of expression is important. For example, what do we do about stereotypes? Do we reject them, replace them with other stereotypes (of human lead for e.g.) - or encourage them to deepen their visual experience through observation and awareness of infinite variety in human faces as well as basic structure. (It is important to understand the teen-age attitude - desire to be independent and yet relying upon acceptance by others in their group. Resenting parental control and yet needing it).

Discussion of symbolism and the use of expressive symbols for next week.

SIR GEORGE WILLIAMS UNIVERSITY

SEMINAR November 27, 1963.

Teaching of Art.

Discussion began around Mrs. B's description of a workshop she had attended at the PSBGM. A representative from a commercial firm had demonstrated techniques and effects that can be achieved with crayons and other materials.

Mrs. B. described the reaction of one of the art teachers who had left in anger because she felt these were "gimmicks"

Question: What is a gimmick? What is wrong with it, etc?

Various answers were offered:

Gimmicks are techniques without clear objectives. Gimmicks are the use of techniques with the product predicted by the presentation of the teacher. Gimmicks are tricks used to achieve "effects" these have no real meaning to the student. Gimmicks are ready-made solutions.

In good art teaching one should start with the problem or idea and let the student find his own solution. Why do teachers resort to this type of teaching?

* Usually because they have no philosophy of art teaching or are not aware of possibilities and are too little prepared in art itself.

The question arose as to what was wrong with a workshop such as the one described?

Opinions included the fact that it was very dangerous to deal with materials and techniques without clearly stated objectives in mind.

The attitude towards the materials used was very important. For example, do we fold and pleat paper to get a certain effect to be repeated by the class, or are we exploring the possibilities and qualities of paper in which case folding and pleating may be one of many effects discovered. If you teach how to do it without the why you are setting up limitations rather than opening up possibilities.

Teachers resort to gimmicks for expediency. It is much better to start with reasons and motivation than solutions and effects. Where can problems or reasons be found.

Mrs. B. brought up the problem of decorating a school lobby. What does it involve?

First of all problems of pleasing principal and other teachers or parents. This is often in conflict with the art teacher's objectives which include learning something about art, children doing things honestly in their own way and working as a group.

Ways of organizing a group project were discussed and means of getting art problems in such as experimenting with colour mixing through overlapping transparant papers. Teacher must do preplanning in a large project but try to leave room for children's choices and solutions.

* Exhibitions are very important in informing rest of the school of art teachers objectives in teaching art. These should include titles and be organized to teach through what is shown.

Mrs. S then read a quotation from Creative Arts in American Education (Munro & Read) pp. 28 & 29 around adolescents interests and needs in art education. They want to have reasons for doing things, they are anxious for appraisal, they have an increasing interest in other people and in physiology and sex.

Portraiture is of great interest and biographies of artists, especially the rebels.

He states that the real interests of teenagers are avoided in the motivation of high school students. Led to a discussion of how this worked. For example the drawing of nude models, etc. Ways of including real feelings and conflict through symbols was brought up by Mrs. S. Art elements can be used in expressive ways to provide the opportunity for personal expression. Inner feelings can come through.

SIR GEORGE WILLIAMS UNIVERSITY

SEMINAR December 4, 1964/63

Teaching of Art.

Began with a continuation of previous seminar, the problem brought up by Munro, the avoidance of real adolescent interests in motivating High School students in art.

In teaching young children one is constantly able and willing to deal with their interests.

Social customs, community pressures prevent this in High Schools.

Question: How can we talk about emotional involvement if we leave out conflicts and phantasies of adolescents? What is emotional involvement?

One can be involved in work, materials art problems as well as in behaviour or the acting out of emotions?

Teenagers want to learn something also. They are also interested in visual reality. They could be encouraged to express feelings through figure drawing, gesture movement and symbolic use of colour. Art elements should be taught and techniques of working in new materials brought in to challenge them.

Instead of teaching the above in a narrow, pigeon hole approach (still life, for example) the students interests and concerns could be brought in.

Question: If one tries to do this, however, what happens? Danger of disturbing routine? In general, in other classes. Anything which would stirr things up or excite the class is avoided.

Discussion resulted in the decision that it is possible to have an orderly class and still have emotional involvement, doesn't mean exhibitionism!

Does mean lack of regimentation however and tolerant attitude on the part of the teacher.

Question: How to deal with the few individuals in a class who draw attention to themselves through eroticism in their work? Often happens in clay because of possibilities for freedom and detail -- Answer: not to overemphasize the importance of this either through ignoring it or by praising it. Evaluate the artistic qualities objectively as well as the subject matter. The figure can be looked at as a form, what are its qualities - pictures of sculpture in many styles could be shown.

In figure study - an excellent subject for H.S. level - many considerations are important. Students inhibitions in drawing and painting figures must be considered - what are these due to, how can they be overcome? They want to draw anatomically correct realistic figures this is only one aspect.

There is room for expression of ideas and feelings in figure compositions - relationships between people - symbolism - figure in environment and space and colour. See Picasso.

In order to use colour symbolically, the class must have had some previous experience with colour.

The problem of stereotypes was brought up. The way to work away from them it to enlarge their experience.

Discussion then moved to symbols - what are they?

Much back and forth, finally arrived at the idea that a symbol in art is when something stands for an idea - the particular means more than itself - aesthetic means of colour, line, etc., create symbols.

Symbols must be developed individually and not imposed by the teacher.

Problem of lack of confidence? How to get past this -

Some suggestions: may be due to lack of visual information - encourage them to look need for approval and acceptance of the stage of development they are in awareness of art and its variety - examples of Klee, Primitives, etc., to see good art need not be photographic. Show variety possible --

Question: Is a bowl of flowers a suitable subject for young children?

Depends on age -- also how meaningful this is to child and most important - What kind of results does the teacher expect? Individual ways of seeing - interpreting subjects, etc- does teacher allow for this?

SIR GEORGE WILLIAMS UNIVERSITY

SEMINAR December 11, 1963

Teaching of Art

This session was devoted to a showing of slides by Mrs. S., of a teaching experiment conducted in a Grade 10 class. Two groups were chosen -- one given a structured design oriented approach to 3-d form in paper sculpture chalk and painting, another an emotional, freer type of motivation in clay construction, drawing and painting. See National Art Education Association Bulletin on Research in Art Education.

Question: raised in the discussion included how and when to teach techniques,
effect of teacher's own aesthetic values,
sequence or order in which are lessons occur
should emphasis be on the teaching of art principles?
how can we allow for expression of personal experience (e.g. of clay group in Group B of experiment couple and mother watching).

The necessity to allow for experimentation with new media before expressive possibilities are realized.

The nature and function of research in art education; should it concern itself with teaching methods, process, statistical studies, etc.

SIR GEORGE WILLIAMS UNIVERSITY

SEMINAR January 22, 1964.

Teaching of Art

The seminar began with a revue of slides presented before the holidays. These slides illustrated the experiments in teaching methods undertaken by Mrs. S. at the high-school level. Questions arose as to whether one should teach art elements separately before expressive subject matter was introduced or when? This led the discussion back to a general condition of motivation and what students' interests were? at what level of teaching. How to integrate the psycho-sociological approach with the teaching of art elements. The social attitudes towards art in the culture also affects the adolescent's readiness to become involved.

Mr. H: Summarized the discussion by describing his concept of art education as follows: he did not believe that teaching art should proceed in a straight line. He felt it was a three-dimentional experience which one approched from different aspects each time, but one always kept in mind the other aspects of the problem.

SIR GEORGE WILLIAMS UNIVERSITY

SEMINAR January 29, 1964.

Teaching of Art

The discussion began with presentation by Helen of her first paint class Saturday mornings. They had done studies in texture which she had motivated by talking about what paint could do and experimenting with brush strokes emphasizing the whole paper. Upon questioning by the group she explained that she wanted to concentrate on drawing and painting rather than using a scattered approach and skipping from one material to another . She compared this to what she had seen at the Museum's children's class. The emphasis, to her, seemed to be on group work and murals. Discussion around the matter of Saturday morning classes arose..

Kathy: Felt that the children wanted to have fun and that it had to be different to school.

The group discussed the possibilities of continuity in an informal setting.

Mrs. S: Brought up the experimental class which began Saturday morning at the University.

A survey was made of procedures and results (See notes on Saturday morning classes for details). The results of the first painting lesson which had been introduced in a more open ended fashion where compared with Helen's results they revealed much more about the individual children involved, but in some cases were lacking in aesthetic development. The main difference being that they were all representational, except for a few of the very young group. The question arose as to the problem of getting aesthetic condition into realistic painting.

Plans were made for a following Saturday class from the discoveries of the needs revealed in the survey.

SIR GEORGE WILLIAMS UNIVERSITY

SEMINAR February 5, 1964.

Teaching of Art

Discussion began around the problems of planning a lesson in art and the expectations of the teacher.

The following questions arose : had we set the stage or prepared the environment? how much control should the teacher excert? What is the role of the teacher and how rigidly should we stick to a lesson plan?

Joyce T: Felt that the teacher should not run the class and rather should act as a leader and help the children to do what they want to do. Other felt that this kind of situation would be frustrating to the child who wanted to learn something. Joyce brought in a discussion of another seminar she was attending in group dynamics and described its content.

It seemed that in this seminar the emphasis was placed upon encouraging individuals to act out their needs and discuss reasons for behaviour, etc.

Mrs. S: Brought up differences between a recreational planning and a school situation. The advantages and disadvantages of each were discussed.

A example was introduced by Joyce of a situation where a group worker was confronted with the problem of teen-agers narcissistic interest in a group and whether the group worker's responsibility included anything beyond this interest.

Helen: Then described her second lesson with her Saturday morning class. She had decided to move from abstract paintings to drawings of people. She was amazed to find that children revealed so much of themselves in these drawings. Her comments were"The first week I saw them all as artists, this week I saw them as people."

Questions arose as to whether it was an idea or approach that was desirable to the above. The group decided an integration was necessary and that the ideal was to see your students as individual people who were potential artists.

The discussion came back to the relationship between art teaching and group work or art and psychology.

Jason C: Asked what is the point of art teaching anyway? What does the art teacher do that is different to the group worker?

Everyone agreed that the teacher teaches art which involves adding something to the student's condition and changing values and attitudes, e.g., the development of visual awareness, increasing perception, information, and understanding about art form, ability to use art media in expressive ways, etc.

SIR GEORGE WILLIAMS UNIVERSITY

SEMINAR February 12, 1964.

Teaching of Art

The seminar began with the discussion of class work done in a grade II class, under the direction of Mrs. B., she explained that her motivation was for the children to imagine prehistoric monsters. She also talked about about texture and surface to them and encouraged them to use these in their animals. The results were very varied and well developed, even though done in half an hour. The question arouse as to whether the subject had limited the children's choice. Dicussion arouse as to what children would choose in a less organized class.

The Saturday morning children class was brought in as comparison and the result of their first class experiences were described. Some members of the group brought in experiences they had had in summer camps, which led to a discussion of the difference between crafts and art, and the fact that craftmanship in ceramics and pottery was a separate but legitimate area of concern. Everyone agreed that Mrs. B's examples were successful.

Comparison between large groups in a class-room situation and the ideal situation in the Saturday morning class.

Mr. H.: Summarized the points brought up, by saying that the larger the class the more important the initial motivation would be, that is to say, it is more important to reach as many as possible in the group with your initial motivation.

Kathy B: Brought up the question "How do you get across to a group so that it means something to every individual"?

Jason C: Described an example of how he motivated 14 year olds to do faces. The group motivation included visual aids. Primitive and Greek masks. And discussion concerning expressive features. The assignment then left room for individuals to express personal feelings.

Kathy: Quoted an art teacher who said that if he had 30 students for 40 minutes, he could only give one minute to each child. This was dicussed and argued because it assumed that you cannot reach the group as a whole or the individual through the group.

Mrs. S: Brought up the example of Dr. Lismer's technique of choosing an individual in the group whom the rest can identify with and dramatizing points through personal reference to the individual.

Helen: Then brought out portraits that had been done in her Saturday class in contrast to her previous lesson, she had not structured the situation as much.

The question arouse as to, how much to teach, why to teach and when to teach.

Pat: Described the effects of motivating a class in another lesson or area and finding the effects tranferring to a later art lesson. Example: noticing lines of hair, during an English class and the subsequent detail appearing in the treatment of hair in another art lesson, which led to the conclusion that confining one's idea of motivating a group in a room in one lesson

left out the total environmental and life situation. Pat also presented a specific question re: collage. "It is alright for the teacher to stop a child when the product looks good to the teacher, even though the child is not finished."

Discussion ensued around the question of teachers' own aesthetic preferences. The readiness of the individual child to respond to aesthetic choices and the need for some children to complete a certain project for emotional reasons.

SIR GEORGE WILLIAMS UNIVERSITY

SEMINAR February 18, 1964.

Teaching of Art

Mrs. S: "What direction should the seminar take -- are members satisfied with it?"

Jason: Suggested we all take an idea for an art lesson and try it in our groups -- discuss the results.

All agreed after discussion that a design problem was a good idea. What is a design problem? Children's concept of abstract art - "modern art" as anything goes -- was brought up -- Led to a discussion of misconceptions about modern art and where they come from.

What do we do about it? Show examples of good contemporary art. Education of parents important too. Talks and workshops, etc.

Problem for group to try was again brought up. Decided to aim at awareness of surface texture rather than plan method in seminar, everyone would work it out for their own group in their own way and compare results and methods.

Mrs. S: then brought up the idea of visits to schools -- all agreed and arrangements will be attempted.

Discussion then was directed to the relationship of an art student's own art training and training in art education or methods of teaching the training of teachers of other subjects was discussed -- Bruner's "Process of Education" mentioned and the fact that every subject has a process no matter what level we are dealing with. Was there anything in common between our own experience in the studio and the experience a child had? Differences of opinion here -- but all agreed that the principles were the same.

Question: is it a good or bad thing to think about the implications for teaching while engaged in the subject yourself? Again very marked differences of opinion.

Kathy: always thought of it and found it interfered with her own work to some extent,

Jason: never thought of it,

Joyce: thought it would interfere --

Mr. H.: said awareness of method was unavoidable. If you had already decided to become a teacher everything in your life would be affected because teaching was a way of life.

Much discussion followed including analysis of different teaching methods employed. Also decision that we learned how to teach from the ways in which we are taught. Relationship between creating & teaching brought up --

Mr. H.: summarized by saying that making art and teaching it was the same process all part of the same life and experience.

SIR GEORGE WILLIAMS UNIVERSITY

SEMINAR February 26, 1964.

Teaching of Art

This session was devoted to UNESCO slides on Art Education, a series on design excercises.

Discussion centered around questions raised by linear excercises, filled in with colour.

Is it automatic? What learning is there, etc? The effects were attractive, several people thought they were excellent means of stimulating students to consider rhythm, movement and colour relationships.

Mrs. S., brought up the misuse of the techniques in elementary schools.

It was decided that anything could become a gimmick, unless the reasons for doing it were very clear and it was presented by a teacher who knew enough art to look for and stimulate artistic qualities.

The problem of High School students' lack of previous art experience was raised. They responded to excercises of this sort, needed motivation.

Mrs. V., questioned reasons for lack of art specialists in elementary schools.

Mrs. S., presented some historical background on the history of art education in Canadian Schools.

SIR GEORGE WILLIAMS UNIVERSITY

SEMINAR March 4, 1964.

Teaching of Art

Seminar began with Helen showing drawings done in oil pastels by her Saturday morning class of 8 - 12 year olds.

They had been sketching from life, doing separate sketches, then doing a composition puting the figures in a setting.

She had told them to look for the whole figure instead of details, the gesture and individual differences - emphasizing physical feeling. Also then relate the figures to a background. (She decided later that this was too much for one lesson.)

Examples shown led to the following questions and discussion:

Teacher's preferences due to teacher's own aesthetic orientation or taste.
What should teacher expect in the way of results?
Stereotypes and what to do about them?
Freedom in ways of working, what does it mean?
Difference between freedom and haphazard?
Adele: defined freedom as lack of rigidity, ability to work independently -- and to experiment.

Everyone agreed that the haphazard type of work showed lack of involvement.

Mrs. S., suggested this was usually due to lack of a goal or objectives in the mind of the student.

Joan: said that teacher had to have freedom too in order to accept variety of results from individuals.

Mr. B: described problems faced in actually teaching high school children: the pressures of members, necessity to maintain standards, problems of grading, problem of lack of interest and art ability. He brought up the problem of stereotyped glamour girl drawing and the point that it commanded prestige and acceptance by the group. Destroying it created problems.

The group discussed social and psychological implications of this idealized concept common among adolescent girls. What's wrong with it?

Decided it prevented a girl from developing visual awareness and also expressing deeper and more individualized feelings and ideas. However, one must be careful not to reject the student and the stereotype but rather provide stimulation and teaching to extend experience and liberate the student.

Mr. B's point about grading and standards created much concern about the nature of the teacher's role in encouraging expression in every student. Also the difficulties in marking art. The whole problem of evaluation and standards; objective standards and individualized teaching was opened up for future discussion.

Mr. H.: said the teacher had to remember that the most important part of teaching was what the teacher did for the individual, the individual had to be uppermost.

Mrs. S.: said that it was important to have very sound beliefs and objectives in teaching art because unless one believed strongly in a philosophy of art education the pressures of community tastes, physical and administrative problems encountered would be too much to fight.

SIR GEORGE WILLIAMS UNIVERSITY

Department of Fine Arts

Seminar on the Teaching of Art -- March 18, 1964

This session consisted of reports of visits made to high school art classes.

Cathy began with a description of her visit to Montreal High School. Mrs. G., an art teacher, had given her a long talk on her philosophy of art education. She is against the teaching of design because it is not free expression, but she gives the students a series of exercises in art followed by a "realization", in terms of themes, which incorporates the abstract exercises; for example, line and rhythm. She showed Cathy a project in which dolls had been dressed in national costumes made of basic geometric forms, which was an example of one of these "realizations". Cathy felt the results were very "designey" and could not tell the difference between these exercises and the teaching of design. She said, however, that each doll was very individually treated and showed a great deal of imagination on the part of the students. She summarized with the impression that philosophy and practice in this case were not exactly consistent.

Irene reported on a visit to Mrs. W's art room in Montreal West. She found the atmosphere very stimulating. There seemed to be interest in a variety of techniques and media and the students seemed very involved. In terms of history of art, the teacher dictates notes which the students illustrate with pictures of their choice. The lesson they were engaged in at the time was an assignment to work with poster paints as a wash and to do a harbour scene. The question arose as to the degree of talent evidenced in the work. This led to a discussion of the teacher's expectations which, in turn, led to the consideration of grading and evaluation.

Joan reported on another school in which she found an inconsistency between practice and theory again. Mr. L's stated theory was that his objective was to achieve appreciation of art, not to produce art. However, in practice, the work they were doing was very slick and illustrative. His attitude seemed rather negative to Joan as he seemed to be looking for the easy way out of teaching problems.

Joyce described a visit to the room of Miss C. who was in her first year of teaching. She did not seem to have as yet a clear philosophy of art education. Her lessons were isolated problems which did not seem to follow through. Her approach to art history was fragmentary as well.

Discussion followed on the teaching of art history and its relationship to the studio work, as well as the reaction of parents to the work of the children. It was brought out that children, in doing assignments at home, very often arouse interest on the part of the parents in art which was not there before.

SIR GEORGE WILLIAMS UNIVERSITY

Department of Fine Arts

Seminar on the Teaching of Art -- March 25, 1964

Students described their observation experiences of the previous week in Montreal High Schools. These were critical, assuming, and often, sweeping generalizations. All the students made references to certain practices and in common glee ridiculed them as suspect. There was an air of common agreement (brainwashed!). Mr. Pinsky challenged the "in group" assumptions that were taken as truths for all without first probing their implications. For example, he questioned the whole idea that copying is wrong. He told of the child who first was told to copy (because he wouldn't draw otherwise) and then told, "Perhaps you could put a feather in the hat." He was led to invention. Mr. Pinsky also told of his own experiences of copying a street painter, and of copying picutres. Are they not valid? He questioned Gloria's description of a lesson in drawing from the figure, in which children were told to draw shadows. "O.K., how would you do it?" Jason described Helen's lesson with children drawing each other à la gesture. It was valued as good, but Mr. Pinsky countered with the possibility of drawing directly without the motivation of gesture; but rather one child might draw an exquisite line of the waste or draw the shoe laces with great detail because he was learning to tie laces at the time. (One motivation was internal; the other was dreamed up by the teacher.)

The question of experience as a handicap or as an increasing value was discussed as Mr. Pinsky disappeared back to his senior class. A teacher may burn out or wear a deep rut deeper; or experience may deepen the range and mastery. The youthful belief and exuberance may succumb to the pressures of routine, etc.

Irene suggested a problem. "How do you know when to stop letting them be child-like and natural and start imposing your ideas on them?" I challenged the whole concept that these are opposites. If the teaching is built upon those shoe lace motivations, does it not stretch him rather than contradict him?

Cathy presented the work of her last class -- studies in texture. She wanted to rush rather than show each one as an individual worthy of more examination. The student who worked a symmetrical composition was asked to try to make it more "interesting" (i.e., less symmetrical). He did, but the finished result showed a symmetrical picture with another two pieces overlaid after. The conflict was evident in the finished work. The French boy also worked in symmetry; Cathy preferred the "abstract expressionist" style of another student. But Marion went into great analytical raptures over the French boy's symmetry; while I loved it too -- especially the little brown dot all alone. It was such a special brown dot. The French boy couldn't speak English but he could speak art, no? Another boy, from India, worked with lines and with very subtle colours and textures, leaving much white background. This was condemned as less because it did not fulfill the aim of rich textural relations of the lesson. I questioned the validity of the whole frame of reference of the aim. Did it include room for this boy, too?

Cathy liked students to get excited, but can the shy not also be just as involved? Cathy liked very much another boy who was at every class. His father was a Phys. Ed. type and failed to understand the validity of art, but the boy wasn't good in Phys. Ed., so he loved art. Was that his motivation, like the shoe laces? In another case, Cathy had suggested that a boy fill up more space. He did. Children are impressionable. Wow, are they!

Nancy told of experiences of children with colour associations with days of the week and other individual sources of motivation. Every word is subject to endless influence, every action. I suggested also that one of the greatest sources of motivation is to copy the teacher who is idolized. Doesn't this make the results of all the same? No, each child idolizes a different love in the teacher or person to whom he aspires.

Jason showed the work of his four-year olds (half the age of Cathy's old class.) The question of predetermined results was brought up - merely by setting out certain colours, materials, shapes, etc. Jason had limited to browns and warms, large pieces (which tended to get torn to smaller bits - a few children overlapped small pieces on top of the larger pieces), and added an additional possibility of making their own textures with soap and other powders. I brought up the fact that during the Saturday class at the university, the young types had tried many materials at first, then were very selective in combining variations of closely related materials, textures, or colours.

The class was invited to attend the exhibition-discussion on April 3rd at 8:30.

Subjectively,

Stanley Horner

SIR GEORGE WILLIAMS UNIVERSITY

Department of Fine Arts

Seminar on the Teaching of Art -- April 1, 1964

This session was devoted to the showing of UNESCO slides on art education.

In summary, it was discovered that there were three different approaches to art education in the three sets of slides.

The English slides stressed (1) observation and discovery of aesthetic qualities in environment; (2) translation of these discoveries into design through various media; (3) the expressive quality of these media through the limitations of design.

The group discussed the importance of revealing new experience in a vizual way and questioned what is expressive. For example, an abstract arrangement of objects of found materials, such as slate and wood, seemed very expressive even though abstract.

The American approach seemed to concentrate on the emotional and psychological implications of art experience. The emphasis was upon the individual student, his background development and the way in which art was used to help him in his adjustment to life. In addition to this, there was an awareness of the qualities and potentialities of the materials used and a tendency to let the material be the limiting factor in expression.

The group questioned the psychological orientation as being excessively "therapeutic".

The German approach emphasized design and there was a distinctly Bauhaus aesthetic revealed. This was the set of slides which had the greatest uniformity in final product and in which it was most difficult to identify the individual personality of the students. This aesthetic orientation was very much connected with architectural design and an "advertising" look.

Marilyn questioned the basic assumption inherent in this approach which isolated design from the expressive needs of the student.

SIR GEORGE WILLIAMS UNIVERSITY

Department of Fine Arts

Seminar on the Teaching of Art -- April 8, 1964

Joyce started the discussion with an incident in which a friend of hers, an art student at the Museum, had requested, on registration, a particular class assignment. She did not want to be in Molinari's class because she wanted to paint figuratively. This started a heated discussion about the desirability of a teacher imposing his style of work upon the students. Mrs. S. described various approaches to this problem, pointing out that many mature artists who had a highly developed personal style tended to teach solutions rather than open up areas of investigation. They emphasized the approach they had arrived at through years of trial and error with letting the students experience the trial and error for themselves. This led to a discussion of the needs of the student and ability of the teacher to identify with these needs.

Joyce then related a recent experience with her own eight-year-old daughter, in which she tried to teach her something specific. This occurred in a situation when the child was working for a badge in art for Girl Guides. Joyce tried to help her make a "good" picture by showing her how to create an illusion of depth. Her daughter was very dissatisfied with the result which she did not "like". The whole question of motivation and purpose was brought up. Competitions and external reasons for working seem to have negative results. Joyce's reasons for imposing adult standards at that point were questioned. Mr. P. suggested that the individual child tells you how to teach him and what he needs, and that there were no limitations or rules which tell us what to teach at what age. The techniques of teaching should be individual and spontaneous. We can talk about principles and objectives. The method of teaching is not as important as the objectives because each teacher will find a method which is personal and spontaneous if his objectives are clear.

Cathy then asked if we were not concerned with improving the child's drawings and paintings in any way. Do we accept everything a child does; do we do group evaluation to teach them how to improve? Do we draw for the student?

This led to a discussion of ways and means of teaching students and questions as to what we meant by <u>improvement</u> in art.

The dangers of drawing for students were brought up by Mrs. S. There was a good deal of disagreement on this subject. Mrs. S. admitted that it was natural for an art teacher to draw as a means of communication. Someone pointed out that a teacher sometimes draws to show off her ability to the class. The discussion ended with questions rather than answers, coming back to "what are we trying to achieve in the art class?"

LOWENFELD REVISITED

Harold McWhinnie

Probably no single individual has had such a powerful influence in the last two decades on art education in the United States as did Viktor Lowenfeld. Although the volume of Lowenfeld's major writings in art education theory is actually quite small,[1] he was the teacher of the graduate student in art education par excellence and as such has had a truly great influence upon the field. He gave art education in this country a frame of reference, a point of view.

However, certain forces in education today make the uncritical acceptance of Lowenfeld's position no longer tenable. These forces are:

(a) The drive for excellence in education and the re-emphasis on subject matter content in all areas.[2]

(b) The current widespread disfavor towards the idea of the child-centered school and the child-centered curriculum.

(c) The increase in the level of sophistication in research on creativity and perception have offered us new hypotheses.

The third edition of Lowenfeld's Creative and Mental Growth appeared in the year of Sputnik One. The resulting revolution in educational thinking in this country would have necessitated some kind of revision in his point of view had Lowenfeld lived. It is not my purpose to attack Lowenfeld's work but I wish to explore some weaknesses of his basic point of view. It is my belief that a continued uncritical adherence to many of his positions will cause the field of art education to become out-of-touch with present-day realities in American education and, furthermore, that some of the weaknesses in the art educator's position in relation to the subject matter fields may, in part, be traced to an uncritical acceptance of the Lowenfeld point of view.

There would seem to be four major weaknesses in the structure of Lowenfeld's book, Creative and Mental Growth. These weaknesses are:

(a) An uncritical acceptance by Lowenfeld of the research from psychological sources upon which he bases much of his theory.

(b) A serious lack of documentation by Lowenfeld for many of the studies which he cites and the statements he makes based upon this research. It is very difficult to check and to analyze his data in relation to additional research which has been done since he first formulated his basic theory.

(c) A highly emotional commitment to the "whole" child. Lowenfeld let his emotions interfere with the critical investigation of his theory.

(d) The highly authoritarian manner in which he stated his assumptions as unquestionable truths rather than as tentative hypotheses.

Lowenfeld tends to overemphasize the therapeutic and emotional roles for art education. This may be one reason that many art programs today are filled with the academic deviate of every variety. Lowenfeld's European orientation was towards the therapeutic values of art for the retarded, the handicapped, and the emotionally disturbed child. Upon his arrival in this country in 1940, this orientation seems to have become wedded to the idea prevalent in many leading educational centers, the idea of the child-centered school.

After World War One, under the strong influence of Freudian Theory, educators like Marietta Johnson, who promoted the "Freehope Plan" and Florence Cane with her Walden School, promoted the idea of the release of the individual from his inhibitions through art experiences(4). Since the goal was complete freedom from inhibition for each child, "child-centeredness" became the sine qua non for these influential educators. Marietta Johnson conceived of the idea of education for the whole child within the basic frame of reference of Rousseau. In Florence Cane's school, expressionism in education was seen as part of the larger movement of expressionism in art. The child emerged as an artist in his own right and it became an article of faith that he must be allowed to create his own experiences, his own values.

For Lowenfeld, art would seem to have two main functions in the school curriculum. These two functions are:

(a) Self-expression (b) Self-adjustment

The emphasis by Lowenfeld on group adjustment and on the socializing process probably stem from the second great trend of the Progressive Education Movement. In the decades of the 1930's the importance which the progressive educator placed upon group processes and on the socialization function of the school, (especially during the early years of the elementary school) may have grown out of the patterns of family and urban living which characterized those depression years. The family unit was small, usually one child, and he lived isolated from other children in city apartments. The children during these decades were limited in their contacts with other children. This pattern of family living has changed radically after World War II with the growth of the suburb and the larger family unit. These recent developments may have made the socialization function of the elementary school less important today.

Lowenfeld's insistence on the value of the creative behavior of the child rather than on the aesthetic product may be reflected in the unfortunate gap which now exists between the art educator and the artist. The artist has tended to misunderstand to some extent the basis of Lowenfeld's insistence that the emphasis in art education be on the creative behavior of the individual. Lowenfeld's insistence on behavior over product, on art as a means and not as an end, has made any effort to differentiate structure and sequence of the elementary art curriculum difficult, if not impossible. This point of view towards process rather than product, in less gifted and dedicated hands, has come to mean the wide proliferation of fads and frills, gimmicks and gadgets, which have come to characterize many art programs.

Lowenfeld's basic theory has influenced how he looks at each major media. For example, he writes that charcoal will best suit the visually minded child since, as a media, it is best suited to achieve the visual image. He writes as follows:

> "The visually minded student will, therefore, feel at ease with charcoal in his hand; whereas, the expressively inclined, haptically minded student would feel unhappy with this "smeary" material." (pp 342)

Let us analyze this statement for it shows how Lowenfeld's theory permeates his entire thinking. Lowenfeld assumes a one-to-one ratio between an individual's mode of perception and his use of the specific art material without consideration of many other variables which also would affect selection and preference of specific materials. Within Lowenfeld's system there are certain media suited to the visual child and certain ones suited to the haptic child and in using these materials each of these types will evolve those techniques best suited to their expressive self needs. Lowenfeld provides little evidence to support his basic claims. Numerous other inconsistencies arise in Lowenfeld's attempt to apply his basic theory.

For example, mural painting is very important within Lowenfeld's curriculum due to the social values which derive from a group activity. If you will recall, art had both self-expressive and self-adjustment functions. Yet the function of mural as an adornment of the architecture is permanent or semi-permanent. This function of the mural would seem to conflict with Lowenfeld's insistence on the process over the product.

Lowenfeld attempts to view art history in terms of his haptic, and visual theory. He states on page 405 of Creative and Mental Growth that the haptic artist in haptic epochs of art will use lines (Wolfin's linear style) whereas, in visual epochs the artist will use light and shade (Wolfin's painterly style). Is not this a contradiction of his basic theory? Lowenfeld would imply here that haptic and visual tendencies are now culturally determined states (learned behaviors) whereas his original formulation of these dichotomies was that they were genetically determined individual states.

In his third edition of Creative and Mental Growth, Lowenfeld attempted to use some of the recent research in creativity. He writes as follows:

> "Recent experiments in finding attributes which are responsible for general creativeness in individuals have revealed that they are the same attributes as found in any creative art process. Vice versa, it can then be said that creative art processes stimulate creativeness in general." (5),(6)

This is a statement of Lowenfeld's basic philosophy; wherein lies the essential weaknesses? While it is true that the research in creativity may have found some indications of commonalities among the attributes of creative individuals in various fields (7), Lowenfeld's conclusion that "creative art processes stimulate creativeness in general" is, to say the least, premature. While it is hoped that this may be so, the evidence that art experiences enhance creativity is not conclusive.

The problem of the transferability of creative training involves five very complex problems, all of which will need considerable research before we will be able to know what contributions art experiences will be able to make to creative growth in general. These five research areas are:

(1) The transfer of creative training in art to various areas of cognitive functioning.
(2) The general vs. the specific theories of the nature of the creative process.
(3) The stability of measurement of creative behaviors.
(4) The validity of measurement of creative behaviors.
(5) The concept of creativity as a learned behavior vs. the concept of creativity as an innate process.

In addition to the idea that personality traits are of primary importance to the creative process (Lowenfeld's position); it is now believed that the creative process itself, as one of many cognitive processes, may be enhanced by reinforcement contingencies, i.e., reward and punishment, and thus "shaped" like other intellectual behaviors. If this latter position is correct, creativity may be modified by appropriate learning experiences and by instructional strategies. Lowenfeld's position would seem to be, that the child is by nature creative and the function of the teacher is to provide the tools, the materials, and the environment necessary to let the creative flowers develop. This may be described as the era of "let the thousand flowers bloom" in art education in this country.

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Lowenfeld, Viktor. "Tests for Visual and Haptical Aptitude", Journal of Psychology, Vol.58, 1945.
(2) Article by Ralph G. Beelke in School Arts, February 1963.
(3) See the article by Rouse in this issue of Creative Crafts. Rouse attempted an empirical test of Lowenfeld assumptions in relation to research in individual differences in perceptual style by H. A. Witkin.
(4) For an excellent account of this entire movement and the relations with the development of art education see Lawrence Cremin's Transformation of the School.
(5) Dr. June McFee in her study of creativity, which was done as part of the secondary education project at Stanford University, hopes to report some data which will give us some indication of the possible transfer of creative training from the arts to divergent cognitive abilities.
(6) Lowenfeld, Viktor, op.cit.
(7) Barron, Frank; and Welsh, G. S. "Artistic Perception as a Factor in Personality Style; Its Measurement by a Figure Preference Test," Journal of Psychology, 33 (1952) 199-203.

Biographical Note:

Mr. McWhinnie is completing work on his doctorate in art education at Stanford University. This past year he has taught a seminar in art education theory at Stanford. He has taught at the University of Chicago Laboratory School and spent a year in the West Indies teaching art on a Fulbright Teachers exchange grant. He will join the art department staff at San Fernando Valley State College as an assistant professor of Art.

INSEA Conference, Montreal, August 1963
Address by Lois Lord

FREEDOM AND DISCIPLINE IN ART EDUCATION OF THE FUTURE

The future is tomorrow and we must start planning for it right now. In thinking about art education of the future we need not necessarily look for new and dramatic changes but for growth and development of aims and theories which are now in practice. There are some immediate problems which determine the future of art education. One of these problems which concerns me deeply is the necessity to overcome confusion and define what we mean by freedom and discipline in art education. Freedom and discipline in art are closely related and both are fundamental for each boy and girl who is to have continuing art experiences.

At the international level perhaps we can come to some common understandings of what is freedom and what is discipline in art education. The technique of teaching that will help each child to develop freedom and discipline may vary in different cultures or in different situations within a culture. Children develope some attitudes and disciplines as the result of planned teaching, others from the attitudes of their elders and still others come from the climate of the society of which they are a part. How these built-in attitudes and disciplines affect the teaching of art may be considerations for further discussion. For example, what a teacher actually says and does to provoke free individual art expression will be determined in part by the extent to which his pupils are conforming or independent.

In the past, to some people in the United States and some other countries as well, freedom in art education meant leaving a child alone either to uncontrolled splashing with materials or to flouner without any direction. This often went on under the heading of "expressing emotion" and it was felt by some people that any regard to structure, the relationship of color, form or line, to aesthetic quality would inhibit the child. To these people discipline meant something rigid imposed from without by the teacher and something that would stifle creativity. True freedom in art must come from within and may come as the result of a child's struggle to make a personal statement which is honest and his own. True discipline is self-discipline because it too comes from within and it must be cultivated to develope fully.

I see the real danger at the present time as a reaction against the laissez-faire permissiveness that went on in the name of freedom there may be a return to rigid and dictated teaching. It may not take the form of copying as in the past but the setting of rigid lessons and stressing techniques for their own sake. Or, it may take the form of setting "topics" without real regard to the deep interests of the individuals in a group, or the giving of design problems which have lost their vitality and the power to inspire because of constant repetition. There are those materials or so many different techniques in one short term that his pupils never have the opportunity to attain a depth of experience in any one. In my opinion none of these fosters true freedom or self-discipline.

Freedom in art does not necessarily mean work that is large and bold. Recently I spent eight months in Japan studying the art of children in that culture. In some cases the work that was free was bold but in many instances children who seemed to be deeply involved in expression, which we would call free because it was personal, were working with minute detail on paintings that were small and delicate. In every country within a given group there may be individuals whose freedom demands such opposite ways of expression. Perhaps, as teachers we should become more profoundly aware of such individual differences.

I believe that discipline in art is the effort that goes into achieving quality and order in any one piece of work. A sketch or a highly finished piece of art work may be the result of self-discipline. It is not necessarily more self-disciplined to spend a long time on a single piece of work. It seems to me that what is important is that each boy and girl should work spontaneously and that each one should have the self-discipline to carry through his ideas in the manner most suited to the idea and to his personality. To be alive art must have spontaneity. It is a discipline for a person to make the art qualities that he achieves spontaneously a part of his conscious knowledge. We must continually search for teaching methods that will help each pupil to be so free that he is able to search out his own way of working and self-disciplined enough to carry it out with quality.

Our most advanced theories of freedom can become academic and dead if we hang on to them without change. Our self-discipline, if as teachers we are to remain free, must be the necessity to re-examine both our theory and practice continually.